

Chief urges residents to install smoke alarms and also practise home fire escape plans

In the wake of recent fatal fires and serious injuries in Oshawa, Brighton and Midland last week, Caledon Fire and Emergency Services reminds residents to ensure they have working smoke alarms on every storey of their home and outside all sleeping areas. It is also strongly advised that a home fire escape plan be created and practised with everyone in the home.

"Fire moves so fast that you may have less than 60 seconds to safely escape, so early warning is crucial to survival," Fire Chief Darryl Bailey said. "Only working smoke alarms give you that early warning. It's up to each household to make sure smoke alarms are regularly tested so that these types of tragedies do not happen in the Town of Caledon."

Smoke and carbon monoxide alarm tips

• Install smoke alarms on every storey and outside all sleeping areas of the home. For added protection, install a smoke alarm in every bedroom, according to manufacturer's recommendations. Larger homes may require additional smoke alarms.

• Install carbon monoxide alarms outside all sleeping areas if the home has a fuel-burning appliance, fireplace or attached garage. For added protection, install a carbon monoxide alarm on every storey of the home according to manufacturer's recommendations.

• Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms monthly by pressing the test button. Change the batteries every year. Replace alarms according to manufacturer's recommendations.

Simple steps for home fire escape planning

• Everyone should know two ways out of each room, if possible.

• All exits must be unobstructed and easy to use.

• Plan who will be responsible for helping young children, older adults and anyone who needs assistance to escape.

• For accountability, choose a meeting place outside, such as a tree or a neighbor's home.

• Call the fire department from outside the home, from a cell phone or a neighbor's home.

• Practise your home fire escape plan.

• Once out, stay out. Never re-enter a burning building.

Contact www.caledon.ca/fire for more information and safety tips.